MAX MUELLER BHAVAN PUBLICATIONS

Rabindranath Tagore
IN GERMANY

A Cross-section of contemporary
Reports 1921 - 1931
With a Preface by Humayun Kabir

RABINDRANATH TAGORE IN GERMANY

Max Mueller Bhavan Publications

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Rabindranath Tagore

IN GERMANY

A CROSS-SECTION
OF CONTEMPORARY REPORTS
EDITED AND TRANSLATED
BY DIETMAR ROTHERMUND

Preface

I have read with great interest some of the articles included in the Tagore Centenary Volume published by Max Mueller Bhavan, New Delhi. They include contemporary writings on the poet during his visits to Germany in 1921, 1926 and 1930. Many of them are no longer readily available and I have read some of them for the first time. The Max Mueller Bhavan has laid us under a debt of gratitude by bringing together these contemporary records of Tagore's impact on the German mind.

Germany was rising out of the sufferings of the first World War when Tagore visited the country for the first time. In the proceding fifty years, the German people had reached great heights in industrial and military might but had in the process lost some of the spiritual quality which had earlier made Germany the home of philosophy, literature and music. Nationalism began as an assertion of the rights of the people, but almost everywhere it developed an aggressive attitude which sought to deny the same rights to others. Nationalism emerged late in Germany, but perhaps the late arrival itself led to an extreme and unbalanced development. After the colonial exploits of European nations in Asia and Africa in the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, they turned against one another and their clash of national self-aggrandizement reached a new climax in the World War of 1914.

Tagore brought to war-torn and weary Europe the message of cultural autonomy and universal brotherhood. He was one of the staunchest supporters of the self-expression of individuals and nations but he also held that their self-expression must not be based on exclusive self interest but contribute to the enrichment of mankind as a whole. The individual can reach his highest development only through co-operation with and service to his fellowmen. Nations can also achieve their true destiny only when they give more than they take from the common heritage of man.

It was not surprising that during his triumphal march through Europe in the early twenties of the century, Tagore should receive the greatest welcome in Germany. Germany had suffered deeply not only materially but also in the spirit and yet an earlier Germany had provided Europe with resplendent gifts of spirituality, intellect and feeling. Bewildered by the experience of the war, German youth found in Tagore the authentic voice of their own glorious heritage and extended to him a warm and immediate welcome that has rarely been given to a visitor from another country.

Forty years have passed since Tagore's first visit to Germany. The predicament of the world has not however changed. In fact, the sense of bewilderment and doom is stronger today inspite of great advances in material prosperity and the prospect of still more astonishing advances. Today, man can plan to explore in safety the outer space but insecurity has entered into his very hearth and home. The threat of uniformity through regimentation is matched by the threat of fragmentation of mankind into petty grups. Never has the message of freedom and dignity of the individual in the context of universal co-operation based on reason been more necessary than today. The world wide Centenary celebrations in honour of Tagore are a reminder that man has not lost and

cannot lose hope but is seeking to find ways of survival and progress inspite of the challenges of atomic destruction posed by blind hatred and narrow self interest.

I congratulate Max Mueller Bhavan, New Delhi for a fine publication that reminds us of the values of the spirit which alone can prevail over the forces of destruction and darkness.

Humayun Kabir

New Delhi,
21st October 1961.

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Introduction

Rabindranath Tagore visited Germany three times: in 1921 at the age of 60 years, briefly in 1926, and again in 1930. All of these visits were lecture tours which took him to important cities and universities in different parts of Germany.

When the poet first came to Germany in 1921 he was received with great enthusiasm by a large number of people who crowded the lecture halls wherever he went. This first visit was in many ways the most important of his visits to Germany. The early 1920s were a time of intellectual ferment in Germany. The first volume of Spengler's "Decline of the West" had appeared in 1918 and the second volume was published in 1922. The world war had swept away whatever may have been left of the optimism of the enlightenment, and the irrational collapse of a rational world induced many people to look for irrational solutions of irrational problems. The 'cold' intellect was conceived of as an enemy of depth, wisdom, nature and the soul. Genuine heart-searching and wishful thinking were often combined in the contemporary thought of this period. Tagore's message was bound to be evaluated within this frame of reference. He therefore found ardent admirers as well as detractors in Germany. His visit was not seen as an irrelevant courtesy call of a foreign celebrity, it was felt to be a contribution to the discussion which was going on in Germany in those days. The statements of the scholars and writers who came into contact with him at that

time are not only interesting because of what they tell us about

Tagore, they also illustrate contemporary German thought in its quest for new values and ideals.

Tagore's message of hope and harmony was a consolation after the great war. He was venerated in Germany as a seer and a prophet. His sympathetic understanding and his firm conviction that defeat and loss were but a blessing in disguise encouraged the German people. He attributed his own independent development as a man and a poet to the fact that his family had gone bankrupt. Identifying himself with the fate of Germany he indicated that the defeat and the fall of the old order would give the German nation a chance to start afresh. He hoped that Germany would "make use of the fire that had scorched her for lighting up the path to a great future". However, the fire that had scorched Germany proved to be insufficient, a far greater conflagration was still to come, and we can only hope that our capacity to convert heat into light does not require the test of an even more devastating blaze.

Tagore's message was but a translation of the basic theme of his poetry. His writings are permeated by a mood of longing and expectation. The imagery of waiting and coming, searching and wandering is ever present in his poems. This mood has a special appeal to the German mind preoocupied as it is with the ideas of becoming and striving. But coming is not becoming and the poet was likely to be misunderstood. Time and space are only dimensions of the separation of God and the soul in Tagore's universe, they are interchangeable parts of a lower level of reality which can be disrupted by the sudden presence of the aim of all longing.

Tagore's affirmation of the life in this world which Albert Schweitzer contrasted with the Indian tradition of the negation of life has to be understood in this context. Tagore sees life as a suspense in the

separation from God and he accepts it as such. German idealism also postulated a separation of the soul from God, but here the suspense was conceived of as a motor of evolution. With Tagore, however, the separation was willed by God to create an object of love, and the relationship between God and the soul in this suspense does not give rise to a laborious process of evolution, but it is "lila", the bitter and sweet tension between union and separation.

There are three ancient ways to perfection : gnanayoga, karmayoga and bhakti; Tagore chose the latter, but he was very much impressed by what he termed the Western world's perfection of the path of karmayoga. His recognition of the validity of karmayoga also appealed to the German mind. Work and soul were closely connected in the life of Germany, as Prof. Eucken explained to Tagore, but the link had broken. In the rapid transition from a society based on agriculture and arts and crafts to an industrial society Germany had experienced the painful dissociation of work from its aim, and it dreamed of a restoration of the creative unity of man's endeavour. Tagore was hailed as one who knew about this unity, and who could help to recover it. People often forgot that the poet himself was a seeker; they looked to him for answers which, as they thought, the East had preserved while the West had lost itself in the material world.

The ideal of a creative unity of man's life and work, the longing for a new humanism was reflected in the German Youth Movement which tried to shed the inhibitions and artificialities of the Victorian age, and propagated a cult of youth and nature. It was this movement which prepared the ground for Tagore's triumph in Germany. The votaries of this movement revived old songs and instruments and roamed through fields and forests. Young and enthusiastic they felt akin to Tagore's universe, and when he was in their midst they

sang and played for him and took him along to the hills and the forest.

The quest for a new humanism also led to a reinterpreatation of the old imperial nationalism. Germany has been able to produce the most generous internationalism as well as the most fierce nationalism. Like Indian nationalism German nationalism originally developed under foreign rule—in the Napoleonic era—as a noble concept of national unity and self-determination. But Germany was faced again and again with the problem of territorial unity and integrity in an intricate system of a balance of power. This situation vitiated German nationalism. Nevertheless there has always remained a quest for the redeeming grace of international cooperation. Tagore's message seemed to convey this redeeming grace. In this respect his message is as valid today as ever before.

Sanctified days with Rabindranath Tagore
Darmstadt, June 10—14, 1921

(Author unknown)

In Darmstadt one evening Tagore was sitting at the window. The setting sun lighted his face with its last rays and he relaxed and talked about himself. He told us that his name really means the sun (and he continued that) often when he was asked to translate his works into English he had refused to do so and he had said : You do it, you know English much better than I do. His life had been devoted to his people and his own development. But at the age of 50—about 10 years ago—he had felt suddenly and unexpectedly that he should now, after he had reached his peak go to the West, as the sun rises in the East and sets in the West. He had began to translate his works into English, and when he had finished this work he had to go to the West himself, and therefore he started on his pilgrimage to Europe. Thus the poet and sage of India, of Bengal, became the real poet of our time, the prophet who shows a path to the inner longing of our confused race.

"Tagore is a longing personified"—as a Frankfurt newspaper put it so well after his lecture at the university; in political and human dimensions he represents a far-off light.

Every morning at half past ten we met in the garden of the New Palace. We walked on the beautiful lawn which was like a carpet

in the midst of wonderful roses under huge old trees, talking to those who shared our hopes and ideas. Then Tagore would appear on the steps of the palace, usually accompanied by Count Keyserling, his faithful interpreter, since he speaks only English. Tagore wears a long, flowing garment. His gait is light and dynamic. Each of his movements is measured and balanced, an expression of quiet dignity. He would come to a few steps which led into the lower part of the garden. People sat on the steps around him, and he answered the questions which they put to him.

On the first morning he told us about the schools in India which are almost all maintained by donations, because every wealthy man feels obliged to accommodate students and teachers in his house. In India culture is not restricted to a small upper class, all cultural treasures are made available to the people. The great poets and bards of the nation go alone or in groups from village to village and sing for the people about the great and the beautiful. The village elders are sages and their main work is to transmit the spiritual heritage. In India—if I have understood Tagore rightly—everybody seems to feel obliged to transmit to others all that he himself has achieved in terms of spiritual values An Indian never stoops to popularizing a great work of art by bringing it down to a lower level, he retains the original greatness of the work of art and tries to elevate the audience so that they may enter into the spirit of the work. Perhaps the audience may not understand the work at first, but that does not matter, they feel impressed by the greatness of the work of art and thus acquire the right standards of judgement.

Our cult of the dead seems strange to the people of the East. Cold and lifeless stones seem to be ill-suited to commemorate a man. As an example of how India honours the memory of her dead, Tagore

told us about an instance of the commemoration of a man : In a certain place people would gather at the time of the death anniversary of a well known poet and recite throughout the night the poems of the the dead poet, thus honouring his memory—and all this quietly and without much organization as if it were the most natural thing to do.

Later he spoke about the position of women in society. He compared the European woman with the Indian woman. In India there is an outward restriction and inner freedom, with us there is an apparent outward freedom combined with inner bondage. The woman plays a more important role in India than with us, because there she is the guardian of the personal life of the family. In this circle she rules supreme, and the woman who is expecting the fulfill ment of her highest duty is regarded as sacred. The Godhead has two aspects : the one is negative and impersonal, that is will, strength and power—this is the man; the other is positive, personal, female—that is love and sympathy. To the Indian the European women seem to be not free because they have left their own realm and have entered into a completely futile competition with man. With us women venture into a field which is incompatible with their very being, where personality is submerged by outward action. Women can develop only in inner peace, love, and sympathy and therefore there is according to Tagore no problem of the position of women in society as long as women think of their own mission and task. The respect within the family, the respect for the inherent law of a different being is the one principle on which humanity rests. One little instance of this respect I could see for myself when I watched Tagore's son who is an ardent smoker. He would never smoke a cigarette when his father was present, since his father, doe not smoke, even if his father would ask him to smoke.

This respect for the other man was illustrated by Tagore's reply to the question whether he believed in a uniform religion. He said: no, and he added that he believed in unity but not in uniformity. Erery nation and every man could find his salvation only in his own way, and this very plurality is the foundation of truth, because everything that is incompatible with one's own being is necessarily untrue.

When he spoke about purification he especially emphasized that this was not a negative but a very positive process, and he compared it to the renewal of nature in spring when there is a new growth and blossoming everywhere. Tagore absolutely rejects any kind of ascetisism which does not also set free great, strong and pure forces.

The afternoon of the first day was set aside for the school children. Tagore could not receive them outdoors because the weather was bad, thus they marched past him in the great staircase of the New Palace. He told us about his school in India where there are no wall and fences, no rules and regulations. Whoever wants to jump into the water may jump, and whoever wants to climb a tree may climb it. But the life in this school is very intimate since it is based on unlimited confidence. He said his children did not think him to be an old man, they considered his beard to be but a mask and his hair only dyed grey. He sits among them in the shade of old trees and he has to tell them innumerable stories for hours, and he has to invent games, and in the evening there is a competition among the children who can entice him to come to one of the houses when they are going to bed. He would wish that his children could come to Germany and German children to India, because he is sure they would make such good friends.—The festivals over there are so wonderful, they are more intimately related to nature. The

beginning of spring, of summer and autumn is celebrated, and so is the beginning of the rainy season. The sun and the moon are honoured by special festivals.

In the evening Tagore read some of his poems in the townhall, some in English and some in Bengali. The audience was deeply moved, first of all when he read in Bengali. It was pure music, the hall resounded. It was like the voice of an organ, flowing, without sharp incisions and as if one would play on three manuals simultaneously.

On the next day we listened to his great lecture on "The East and the West". ...The impact of his words was enormous, because he spoke like a prophet with an inner enthusiasm, and at the climax of his speech his voice assumed a tone of sanctity like the voice of a high priest.

On Sunday morning we all attended the great rally on a hill near the town. Thousands had come on this wonderful day of early summer, when the sun glitters in the foliage of the trees, and the forest and the meadows breathe love and life. Here everybody met on the neutral ground of God's pure nature: high and low, rich and poor, old and young, those who were deeply moved and also those who were only curious and looked forward to a sensational event. They went, they sat, they reclined, and on the top of the hill in the midst of the forest stood the lonesome sage. The members of the German Youth Movement sang their songs. Then the Duke of Hesse-Darmstadt who had sat at the feet of Tagore rose and addressed his people...and asked them to sing a song for Tagore. It is difficult to describe this moment when thousands of voices sang : "Sah ein Knab ein Roeslein stehn".. and the Duke conducted the choir, this man who still lives in the hearts of his people although he is not

a ruling prince any more. Song followed after song until the whole assembly spontaneously sang the German national anthem which embodies our own faith in Germany's great future. Tagore appeared to be deeply moved. He could only say a few words.....

The happy crowd surrounded Tagore when he drove down the hill, and the young people with their guitars marched singing in front of and behind his car. The Duke walked with them, and the whole scene looked as if it was taken from the Bible. A quiet walk through the forest gave us time to reconsider what we had gained during this unique day.

A further question which was put to Tagore was : Do you believe in divine justice and how do you explain the insane world war ? In this world individuals as well as nations have to fight. Evolution presupposes struggle. However, what kind of struggle should it be ? If we indulge in a brutal struggle like animals we lose the higher meaning of life and kill the heart of our life in this way. All wars since the beginning of this world have a material origin. They are never an expression of a spiritual necessity. Passion, craving, and exploitation are the true reasons for every war, but they are subhuman. The higher principles of life are self-control and sacrifice. The present longing for peace, however, is aimed only at the preservation of a status quo for the victors so that they can enjoy their success permanently, but this cannot be a true peace. A true peace can never be based on a physical point of view, it can only be based on the spiritual values of self-sacrifice and devotion. Disarmament, the League of Nations, and similar institutions are only an expression of the same old spirit. Power is supposed to be defeated by powerful organizations, this cannot work. A different spiritual attitude is needed, without that there is no hope and no improvement.

We have an example in nature itself. The animals which became more and more enormous, as for instance the Ichtyosaurus, Megalosaurus, Megatherium etc. became finally absurd. They represented a wrong principle. Nature itself could not go beyond this point of brute force. A new principle had to be ushered in; Man was its representative, man who came naked and helpless and without weapons into this world. Man inherited the world and at first proved Christ's word : The peaceful shall inherit the earth. Now we have again arrived at a juncture where further armed combat becomes insane. We cannot solve our problems by force. We must try it in a different way. But we are not yet able to shed the preconceived notions of our past, we are bound by our traditions. We are still striving for our salvation along the lines of the old paths, and we do not yet feel the higher force which alone can be our guide. When man was forced to fight against the animals he was also compelled to find a higher principle because he was inferior to them in physical strength. We cannot solve our problems any longer in an arithmetical way by counting our ships and guns, our men and our money. This kind of imperialism has died the same death as those enormous animals : power collapsed in itself. The small, spiritually active entity must become more important than unwieldy power.

India which has been disarmed for centuries, which has been deprived of its external freedom, has retained the God given power to convert its spiritual power into action. India discovered the higher, spiritual meaning of power. Power became a moral and spiritual weapon, and thus it became the higher principle which will shape the world of tomorrow.

Tagore preached with great inner concentration. Persuasive and super-human in his greatness he preaches the faith in the reality of the moral force. We in the West, says Tagore, believe in the reality of

physical force, and this faith - a wrong faith, of course - has given us the strength to get ourselves killed by the millions. But are the Europeans even with regard to their outward circumstances really better off than the Indians who are being beaten up ?

The future belongs to the disarmed nations and Christ's word will come true : 'The peaceful shall inherit the earth.'

Some other time he spoke again about his faith in the young generation of whom he expects everything, because their epoch will be one of the greatest of mankind, and he mentioned especially the German youth. As he himself owed his independent development to the bankruptcy of his family, Germany, too, with its present bankruptcy had a chance to start afresh. The German youth was no longer burdened with a past full of narrow prejudices to which one had to adjust oneself. No, the German youth has tobuild their house a new and nobody can prevent them from building this house according to their own requirements. The German youth is holding up an empty bowl, and if their hands are pure God can pour his blessings into it. And again Tagor showed his love for undiluted truth. Although he was very enthused with the new harmony of German and Indian spiritual life, he did not let himself be carried away, he did not flatter us. He had told us privately that he had never felt so much at home outside India as here in Germany, and because of his intimate contact with his audience he had been able, for the first time, to deliver his great lecture on the East and the West without referring to his notes. But when he spoke now about the future of mankind, he said that he had met people in London and Paris and in other places, people without claim to fame and renown, no scholars, but people who had nevertheless the divine spark of true humanity within them, and who had made him hope for the renaissance of the world. About Germany he only said that he had found the soul of its people in its

forest and its music. I met only a few there, he continued, because only a few can be great leaders, but I felt their power as if they were millions, and he concluded by saying : Germany has many potentialities of future development.

On the eve of Tagore's departure members of the Youth Movement and students had gathered before the New Palace. The sun was setting, and they were dancing and singing in the midst of a great crowd, while Tagore looked at them from a window. I stayed with some friends a little further in the background in the garden; there, from a distance, everything appeared to be a perfect whole, and the music transformed the scene into a dream. The twilight set in, and at last Tagore had become invisible at his window, but one could feel his presence—he seemed to radiate strength and light. At the end Tagore thanked everybody in a little speech in English. When count Keyserling wanted to translate his words the whole crowd called out : Don't translate, we have understood everything. This spontaneous understanding was perhaps the greatest homage that the people could pay to Tagore, and he knew it.

The last day was especially impressive. The Duke was so kind as to invite me to be in the palace when the Duncan School performed dances for Tagore. We were all sitting on the broad steps of the palace, Tagore on the lowest step, on a big red cushion. In a side-room music was played and songs were sung in a low voice. The dancers came one by one, barefooted, in their graceful costumes. They approached Tagore and spread roses in front of him until all the marble steps were covered with roses. It was an enchanting sight. The wave of flowers and their fragrance gave us an idea—as if in a dream—of Indian splendour. Then the children danced a dance celebrating the spring, and they accompanied their dance

by their songs. The graceful rhythm of these dances impressed Tagore. I watched him because I was sitting directly behind him, and I saw that he was softly clapping his hands, following the rhythm of the dance.

And then came the climax of this week—at least this is how I felt about it. Tagore could meet German workers, could stand in their midst and speak to them. It was very touching indeed to see the great sage among these workers. Although he had to overcome the courtly atmosphere which had surrounded him during all these days in Darmstadt, and despite of his language difficulties, he impressed them with his warm personality, and by his radiating love and the pure humanism which he represented. In absolute silence they listened to his speech, even though Professor Goldstein translated only parts of this speech into German. Tagore told these workers about a sect in India whose members are very poor but who regard themselves as very rich, because they are free from all desire, and because possessions mean only a burden to them which would threaten the peace of their soul. Everything that separates men from each other, all partisan strife is completely incomprehensible to Tagore because of his almost divine love of humanity, and because his values are only spiritual ones. But he is not sentimental, he longs for expression in actions. Tagore continued and said : I am out of place on this platform, I do not know your life, your situation, your problems. I am only a poet. But I would like to live among you in order to give you an insight into the divine love that has made my life rich and meaningful. With these words he broke the ice, and the thanks expressed by the spokesman of the workers ended on this note : that this impression may live on in their minds for ever. Tagore stepped into their midst. He did not speak but they felt his love. Disciplined and respectful they surrounded him and he autographed one of his books for their union library. This

was the end of the infinitely rich week with Rabindranath Tagore. These were sanctified days, days of a great experience, days of strength and inspiration. Darmstadt and Tagore have taught me, that only active love can set us free, that our true self can only reveal itself in love.

Count Hermann Keyserling : Rabindranath Tagore

"Der Leuchter", 1921-22

On what does the spiritual progress of mankind depend ? Most people believe that this progress depends on discoveries of new and hitherto unknown things. It is interesting to note, however, that almost all important thinkers have answered this question by stressing that they have not found anything new—this is true of Confuciut, Buddha, Plato, and Goethe, and this is true today of Rabindranath Tagore. Nevertheless, these men who have laid no claim to original thought have influenced posterity more than all the original thinkers together who were there comtemporaries.... Why is Tagore important ? As far as the contents of his work is concerned there is hardly anything new to it. The deepest thinkers expound the same truths at all times. Even if God himself would descend amongst us, he would have nothing new to announce—not at any rate anything that would satisfy our intellectuals. His word would be the word of God only because of its inner meaning that is beyond the human mind. Similarly the importance of Tagore's message rests entirely on the inner meaning of the old truth which he states. To him it means something totally different from what it means to his critics, because his consciousness is rooted in a deeper level of existence, and thus he can give expression to the working of deeper forces. These forces are beyond the grasp of

superficial men, but they express themselves directly through everything that he is and says—this is the secret of his marvellous power over men and nations. He makes thousands of men see once again what all canonical letters have failed to reveal to them. Once the eternal truth becomes directly manifest it appears to be new and rejuvenating like every force of life which is unique and individual and therefore new. The spiritually new cannot be found on the level of facts but only on the level of meaning. Consequently the final decision does not depend on "What" is expressed but on "Who" expresses it, the abstract content of a thought does not convey a meaning, it is the attitude of the personality expressing it that endows a thought with meaning. We may refer to the theories of Adler and Jung in this connection. If we examine these theories in their more profound context, we understand why men like Buddha, Confucius, Goethe, and Tagore, who were no original thinkers in the usual sense of the term, renewed the world of thought, which cannot be said of their more original contemporaries. However, for the very same reason it is rather difficult for the intellectuals to understand these great men. Only those who are perceptive enough to see the inner meaning are able to judge their work.

"*Schoepferische Erkenntnis*"

...It is not Tagore's intellectual quality nor his talent as a poet which seem to be so very great to me, but it is his depth which is manifest in his life and in his speech. It is manifest because his whole personality is permeated by it from the inner core to the outer shell which does not only conform to the Confucian ideal type according to which wisdom has to express itself in a graceful outward form—but it is also grounded in his detachment and transcendence...Tagore has, indeed, achieved what he was striving for. Today his transparence is of an absolute quality, and his physical

appearance and gracefulness at once convey the depth of his soul even if he happens to speak about something unimportant.

"Weg zur Vollendung" No. 6, 1923, Keyserling reviews Tagore's autobiography.

The deeper message of this autobiography is that not only our best minds try to transcend the dichotomy of East and West, but that this attempt is also being made by the men of the East. Among Orientals who are interested in the West we usually encounter those who prefer our outward skills to the depth of their homeland. The clan of Tagore, however, has always studied Western thought in the same way as our best minds have studied Oriental thought in order to perfect whatever one's own culture has left underdeveloped and dormant in one's own deeper life. Therefore it was not our knowledge and our technical know-how, but rather our passion which attracted Tagore's attention. In this connection it may be interesting to mention Tagore's article "Vision of Indian History" which appeared in the first issue of his wondeful magazine "Vishwabharati Quarterly" which proposes to build a bridge from East to West. In this article the poet points out that all important things in India have been created not by the Brahmins but by the Kshatriyas, who are the representatives of impassioned action (*rajas*). The appreciation of this fact may explain Rabindranath's bountiful splendour which is unparalleled in India. Although he knows Western culture intimately he has remained a pure Indian, but seen from the point of view of universality he has attained to a higher level than any of his countrymen before him, because he has to some extent absorbed the predominant features of our culture, too. Thus we may term Tagore the first ecumenical man of Indian nationality, and his importance for all of mankind rests on this fact. This became clear to me when I read his autobiography, and it may also explain why the poet feels compelled to embark ever so often on a missionary journey to all parts of the world.

Paul Natorp : Hours with Rabindranath Tagore

I want to talk to you about Rabindranath Tagore. I feel that the hours which I spent with this wonderful man do not belong to me alone but to all of you, and first of all to those who were looking forward to his visit with us here and who have been disappointed in this hope. I shall try to convey to you all that I can possibly do in such a short lecture. The poet has asked me to tell you how sorry he is for not being able to visit Marburg although he had promised to do so. He was exhausted, and it was time for his return journey ; his visit to Vienna was a matter close to his heart because he had been specially requested to go there. We cannot grudge him this visit, because he did not want to disappoint our German brethren on the Danube.

He wanted to come to Marburg particularly for one reason : he is very much interested in finding out about the attitude of the youth in the most important countries of the West and also in defeated Germany. He wants to come into personal contact with this youth, because the future depends on them. He had been told that I know this youth so well as to be able to inform him about those matters that he wants to know. Therefore he requested me to come to Darmstadt. I gladly accepted his invitation. I have told him the best that I could say. He was very grateful for what I told him and he showed this gratitude by a friendly cordiality with which he received me and which he retained up to the moment of my departure.

What was the motivation for Tagore's long journey to the West, a journey which was not only physically strenuous but also intellectually and psychologically exacting ? I have to say a few words about this, because some rather strange opinions have been voiced with regard to this question. Tagore did not want to be shown around as a poet, sage, and a kind of prince like a fascinating exotic animal. As far as he is concerned he would rather have preferred to tour all countries as a sanyasi, preaching brotherly love and doing penance. But since he had come to know that for some years past he has been appreciated as a poet and as a thinker in the English speaking world and now also in the German speaking countries, he had hoped to establish better contacts if he would first tour the West in this capacity.

In this way he hoped to get an insight into the inner constitution of these nations who had only recently hurt each other in bitter enmity and with utmost violence, and who are even now not inclined to show any brotherly feelings towards each other. He considers such a situation to be a permanent and serious threat to human existence, not only to the nations of the West but also to the nations of Asia and thus also to his own country. He wanted to get a definite idea about the possibilities of bringing about a genuine understanding, not so much among states and powers which in fact are rather helpless, but among human beings, especially among intellectual leaders (if there are such men) in the most important countries, in the victorious nations as well as in Germany, which has fallen from such a great height. He also wanted to find out what he himself might freely contribute, be it as a poet or as a religious thinker and educator, or simply as the man he is. Tagore as a man is not just the sum total of all his different activities, he is a human being in whom all these capabilities are not separately present but in whom there may be even more potentia-

lities, and all of them forming an indivisible whole. He did not come to preach an ideology, to excell in oratory or to gather the laurels of a poet, he wanted to extend the hand of a brother, to unite with those who are headed in the same direction, and – if this could be achieved – to form a solid alliance for a common work for the better future of mankind based on love and simple humanism.

Whoever understood him in this way will be shocked by the fact that Tagore's appearance in Germany has been turned into a stupid sensation of which there are so many, or on the other hand into a political stunt, and this means today in other words somewhat of a public scandal. People have tried to invoke him as a witness to Gemany's greatness and as a witness to the enormous injustice which the enemies have perpetrated upon Germany. Some people may have felt that this was spiritually and practically impossible for the Indian, but they in turn criticised the admirers of Tagore for adoring a foreigner. They said that people who believed the foreign Nobel Prize winner to be an impostor nevertheless fell at his feet while Germans who had ten times more merit had not been honoured in this way. Common people, however, as soon as they could approach him (and they could do so in Darmstadt to a certain extent) immediately recognized his unobtrusive human goodness and greatness and greeted him with sincere good will. His last address in Darmstadt was the one to the trade unionists in the garden of the trade union hall. He does not have much in common with their party views, but he essentially feels that he belongs to them and they to him, and they freely responded to his love and understanding. People were obviously most impressed by the way in which Tagore received and loved children who also loved him. There was nothing artificial about it, wherever he went he had this immediate contact with children. We know from his poetry the almost feminine tenderness of his understanding of the soul of a

child. And therefore I may say that Tagore's encounter with children belongs to the most lasting impression of the days in Darmstadt. We saw how he talked to them, how they were attracted by him, and how they wept when they had to leave the friendly man. An intelligent boy, who is usually rather critical in his responses, said about Tagore : "I do not know whether he is a holy man, but he is surely a very friendly man." And a little girl explained that one could understand much better what Tagore meant when he spoke in his own language rather than listening to the German translation. All who responded to him at all have had the same impression. When reading the newspaper comments or listenting to the discussion of the philistines later on one could not help asking : Has the stupidity of partisan views deprived the Germans of all common sense after they had only recently attained their political maturity; have they lost the ability to see things for themselves, are they unable to see what is right in front of them and what every child can see ? This is indeed the sad result of the political infection of heads and hearts : people do not only judge by biased standards once they have adopted them, but they refuse to judge anything at all and simply accept their party line as a catechism from which they can derive ready made judgements on each and everything...

I do not say this only because I want to drive home a point about which I feel very strongly but because it is vitally connected with my topic. If all the nations into which our poor nation has been split, and the nations of the world in general, have any chance to live together in the future we shall have to revive first of all the will and the ability to see things unprejudiced and not only through partisan eyes. Otherwise, even if gods may descend on earth...it would be all in vain, the gods would be voted down by majority vote. But why do I speak of gods, man is of no value to man any

longer nor is he of any value to himself as long as the party decides everything.

Rabindranath Tagore, however, is a miracle man to us because he has succeeded in remaining a man in the midst of the 20th century and he is still a man in his sixtieth year. He knows how to meet men in a human way however they may behave, he is at his best with children. But after all there is a child in every one of us, and he knows how to appeal to this child in us, because he himself has remained a child at heart, an uninhibited human being, while others try hard to become old men and women and conceal the child within themselves.

I think we are now getting at the core of this miracle man. Why does he move us in such a way that one cannot resist him ? It has been said that he has a miraculous charm: that he is "irrestible". But he who has seen him feels that these are not the right attributes. A child that has not yet learned to repeat stock phrases does not say this uncle is charming, he says he is good and loving. He loves him without asking questions. But, why ? I think because Tagore sees in every man unconditionally the human being and looks to the root of his human existence, he knows how to get at the indestructible nucleus of human existence. Here I find similarities with the best in Quakerism. I read a small booklet by Rufus Jones who describes the 'passion' of Christian love as the recognition of the value of every single human being, the divine potentialities, the royal destiny of every man, that offers a community even to the lowly and lost, embracing everybody. Similar passages can be found in Tagore's work, but with him it is not a doctrine, passion or religion, it does not need these lables, it simply exist. Wherever it is so there is no struggle between brothers and all the conflict within one's own soul ceases, man is reconciled with man, he is

reconciled with nature and with the origin of all creation which is revealed to man in the only true source of revelation, his own soul. Wherever this does not exist the most dramatic poetry, the most convincing doctrine, the most intense religious revival, and the most burning pain of self-sacrifice or even martyrdom will be of no avail, man runs amuck in his hatred and what is worse than hatred in cold estrangement from others and from himself, he murders mankind in himself and around himself; he kills nature and he would if he could do so even kill God in nature and in himself. Of course, the God in us cannot be killed. But in a similar way as in the cruel war the bodies of many of our brethren lay buried under tons of earth and could still be rescued if brotherly love took care of them, God today is submerged though not dead and he can be liberated in us only by brotherly love. This is the simple and deep faith to which Rabindranath Tagore is a witness, a faith about which we do not hear much these days. And for this reason the unprejudiced mind feels immediately attracted to Tagore.

One can never forget how Tagore stood in the wonderful forest on the Herrgottsberg near Darmstadt and how he talked to the crowd around him in simple and friendly words, and how the crowd responded to him by singing German folksongs which he very much liked to hear. I was with my wife among the crowd. A simple old man asked for an explanation of what Tagore had just said. He listened and nodded and finally said, "He must be a man with a strong faith". We answered : "Yes, indeed, he is a man with a strong faith, he does not only believe in God but also in man." What did Tagore say ? He said something like this: As the forest grows and rises out of the dust of the earth and stretches its arms towards the light of the sky and bears foliage and fruit in gratitude for this liberation, thus the song arises out of the soul which is pressed into the dust and reaches, in jubilant

liberation, the throne of God. – You may say that these words are not very extraordinary, that anyone of us could have said the same thing. Perhaps–but the way in which he said it made it appear especially meaningful to all of us, it complied with Goethe's definition of the term meaningful: it meant much to the speaker and therefore it also meant much to the listeners. It meant in other words: Here in the German forest, in German songs, in the midst of a friendly and understanding crowd on a sunny Sunday afternoon you experience something of what you have been looking for; you have an insight into the German soul that greets your Indian soul and accepts your greetings. May our souls from now on grow up together in freedom, equality and fraternity like the dark and beautiful trees of the forest which reach out for the eternal light. Tagore's speeches were always simple, like his poetry, they could be understood by every simple man, woman or child and remained unintelligible only to the super-wise, the learned scholars and Pharisees. But each of his words was meaningful and even the obvious always arose from the depth of the experience of the moment. He always summed up his innermost insights. It was touching to see how he would step aside for a short while at the conclusion of a serious discussion, meditating for a moment on the result of the discussion as if in a prayer and then turning back in order to say good bye, shaking hands and looking at you with an intensity as lovers might look at each other after their first meeting. The sums of all things are always simple. Tagore never bothered to go into details and calculations in his speeches like those we are used to listen to in the speeches of our orators (which therefore seem to be so cold). He always spoke in terms of sums and therefore every sentence seemed to be obvious and simple. And yet, when he finally came to the sum of all sums we were confronted, all of a sudden, with something great and new. It is not surprising to hear that this man always gets up before sunrise and

that he spends the early hours of the day in solitary meditation immersed in an inner vision and silent prayer. At that time he may attain to the sum of sums which remains with him throughout the day, therefore his uttereances which appear like momentary flashes of insight do not vanish as the moment vanishes but get into one's mind and do not fade away.

This is probably the reason for Tagore's fame as an educator. He excercises his educative influence through his poetry, and his writings, but most of all through his school at Shantiniketan; and he influences not only thousands of people directly but also the millions of Bengalis whom he has infused with a national spirit. This is an achievement without a parallel in our time, and so far as the West is concerned we would have to go back through the history of many centuries in order to find a similar phenomenon. This fact distinguishes Tagore from all others with whom we could compare him as a poet, as a sage, as a revivalist, and as a leader and educator. Such men usually gather a community, perhaps in the manner of the pied piper. But there are so many pied pipers and everyone of them has to preach something new in order to attract people. Finally everyone talks to himself only and draws a narrow circle around himself...and thus all speechmaking and preaching does not unify people but separates them and makes them cold and indifferent. Words, sounds, even paintings produce a loud noise like bombs that are thrust at us, they tear holes and it is as if hot lava pours out of wounded souls. But this lava only burns and buries all that comes into its way. There is no communication, no revelation, people hide as if behind a barbed wire. Intellectually and spiritually we still live in the trenches of the last war, and we have forgotten, that there is a wonderful and great world full of the joy of peace and creation beyond this barbed wire.

This brings us to the question : What can Rabindranath Tagore give us ? What can the East give to the West ? But before I speak about the contents of his speeches let me speak about something else which is closely connected with what I have said before. I want to speak about the form and style of his recitations and lectures. It takes some courage to speak about this subject because I have to say certain things which may appear to you as exaggerations. What impressed me most in Tagore was the enormously high level of form and style of this cultured man which contrasted with our lack of all these qualities. I do not want to criticize the manner in which the poet was introduced to us and the way in which his speeches were interpreted. We have to be grateful to those who arranged this meeting. But one could not help feeling how little the arrangements corresponded to the spirit of the Indian. It was an example for the inner cultural conflict between East and West. One could feel something of that spirit of violence of which none of us can claim to be entirely free. I hope the Indian in his understanding sympathy did not see in this anything else but a symptom of the wounds which we received in the war—not only in the war of those terrible four years but in the war which had started long before, and which is still continuing and growing in its vigour and which may grow even more until it becomes unbearable.

This violence, this recognition of an impending danger which does not only threaten the West, but which also threatens more and more the holy peace of the East, has been on Tagore's mind for a long time. He had to be prepared for finding this violence here with us and with all the nations of the West. He expressed this in some of his poems which came to us from afar during the war. His journey was a martyrdom because he had to witness here the stark reality of all that which he could only surmise when he was still at home.
 He is not a monk who has renounced the world but a man who

loves this world and all human beings, who responds to all human values and who is therefore very sensitive when he sees the desecration of everything holy. He must be indeed very much hurt by all the experiences which do not agree with his own pure, strong and noble life. He told us so again and again, not by way of a complaint or an accusation, and also not in a tone of soft forgiveness, but rather in a prophetic manner, stressing that the salvation had to come from among ourselves, and that he was confident that there were signs of improvement and not in the least here in Germany.

His eyes were shining when I told him : Yes, there is a new spirit in our youth, there is a new growth, and whenever one cares to listen and to look carefully one can see a deep seriousness, a pure and courageous spirit of action which is derived from the innocence and openness of genuine youth, a spirit which we had missed for a long time. I reminded him of his little humorous and harmonious play "The Cycle of Spring" which nevertheless conveys such an important message. He had written this play for the boys at Shantiniketan and he himself had played the role of the poet. This is the story : The boys are celebrating the beginning of spring and they want a new play. The poet improvises one : They should go and find the "old man" of whom everybody talks but whom nobody has seen. They start in the morning and search for him throughout the day. Late at night they find his tracks and they think : when we find him we shall punish him allright. The tracks lead into a dark cave, they are sure to get him there. But when they catch him at daybreak and he steps out of the cave they discover that he is not an "old man" but their beloved master. They see that ageing does not really exist, and that what appeared to be ageing was only a process of rejuvenation, as the day is born out of the darkness of the night, and that which is in the way of this rejuvenation is easily

left behind. Truly a simple plot, which—as the poet gladly confessed "he had stolen from the lyrical drama of the poet of this world".— I dared to tell the poet that this play sounded in every detail like a manifestation of the spirit of the German Youth Movement. For this reason I could not but feel hopeful about the fate of our people, it will find itself again in this youth, it will pursue the "old man" until he reveals himself as the eternally young, the symbol of rejuvenation. Tagore's eyes were shining ! And they were shining again when on the occasion of the last open meeting, in the garden of the Duke, one of our youths thanked Tagore (in English) and did so in a similar way as I had done in our private dialogue some days ago; he also mentioned the "The Cycle of Spring" and applied this parable to the wonderful old man with his childlike eyes who was standing there in front of us in royal dignity.

Indeed, one has to have the indestructible soul of a child and virile strength in order to retain the courage of faith in these days, and thus not only to preserve but to enhance what I had praised in this man : form, style, and culture. Actually I am looking for a more precise term for this phenomenon. Perhaps I shall get closer to what I want to express by first mentioning what it is not : it is not something that can be learned, trained, or bred, even though much education and discipline may be an additional requirement. It is nothing that can be made, it is something that grows, that rises from hidden sources like the growth of a tree, or a forest, of a landscape, of the earth as a whole, of all the infinite family of planets and suns which together are our living world, the living body of God : growth emerging from the right kind of soil with sufficient space and time, enough of light and breath of the sky, the very essence of harmony, rhythm and *'melos'* of growth, rising from the earth but striving towards the sky. But all this is nature not culture you may object.

Of course, no comparison is perfect. There is, indeed, a difference :

The tree—at least that is the way we think it to be—does not know about its growth, it simply grows. Man knows about his growth, he enjoys it, clings to it and forms it with his will and he radiates this growth and encourages others to free, equal and brotherly growth around him. He helps them to grow, and when the time has come, he freely yields so that others may take his place. This is culture and yet remains nature, only it is elevated to a new dimension of consciousness. This is the foundation of form and style.

Some people have coined the term culture of expression. I think this term to be a tautology. All culture is expression, language, self-expression, giving of oneself to others in order to find oneself again, a greeting from one to the other, like breathing in and breathing out—Goethe compared it to the two phases of the heart beat. This is the origin of verse and melody, through contrast harmony is deepened and reveals its connection with the eternal and infinite harmony of the universe of which we are unconsciously aware and to which we always return, it is rhythm in its most all embracing meaning which also includes all works of art. But art is again a rather insufficient term ; the Greek culture did not know this term, because *'techne'* meant to them only the technique, the way of doing something. Even less sufficient is the term aesthetics which seems to imply that we are aiming at the nicety of outward performance only, as if we are not interested in the formative, dynamic and pure qualities of growth. This growth, of course, rests blissfully in itself. But it is only the creative energy (The 'Poietic') which decides whether any substance arises out of this bliss. He who does not create a form does not really have a feeling for it. It is not something beyond life that thus finds expression, but it is life itself and its perfection which expresses itself in this way : growth, gesture, the movement of the muscles and nerves become word, sound, line and bodily form, alive and vibrant, never stiff and dead.

What I admired most in Rabindranath Tagore was the marvellous unity of expression, his wonderful poise—not a single movement of his limbs, of his sensitive hands, of the muscles on his forehead, of his mouth ever disturbed the complete harmony of the expression of his inner self. The soft, almost feminine modulation of this voice and the royal dignity of his appearance enabled him to express the infinite range of sentiments from sweetest wisdom to the most tragic mood. Let me try to illustrate this by a few examples. Even the recital of some poems in English, which I had never heard in this way before, was impressive because of its vibrant and rich tone. We know that good orators are able to portray the wind and the falling of the rain as well as the rolling thunder by means of their expressive modulation ; but with Tagore all this was even more pronounced and heightened. The words themselves were falling, raining, thundering, and made the soul itself resound. When he recited one of his most beautiful poems : "He comes, comes, ever comes", there was a tense, anxious but still infinitely blissful longing for something that is unheard of, overwhelmingly holy. He who recited the poem seemed to express in every single word the whole theme of the poem which was embedded in his soul ; and the completeness of the poem seemed to arise in him only here and now like a bud that opens when it is touched by the rays of the sun. But all this became insignificant when compared with the subsequent recital of the same poem in the poet's mother tongue. There was not only a greater freshness and originality, there was also an even subtler rhythm, a finer variety of sound and response, and a wonderful melody which hardly any language of the West can attain. Only if we go back to the rhythm of ancient Greek music or to the best compositions of German music we may get an idea of the possibility of such a music of language. But even then we shall have to confess that we have never listened to anything that can be compared to this music. There is much that seems to

remind us of Greek music, but the alternating short and long tones are not so important in this recitation as the recurrence of short and long tones of equal length in a three beat rhythm, the measurement without ever being rigid seemed to be nevertheless very accurate as we expect it to be in real music but hardly in a recitation of poetry. But this recitation was not a song, it was only a rhythmic diction with an accurate and subtle intonation. I think that listening to this I became, for the first time, aware of the importance of smallest intervals (not only quarter notes but an eighth of a note). There was a poem which required a slight rai ing of the voice from one verse to the next. This was achieved within the narrowest perceptible limits but with an audible accuracy. Thus it went on from one line to the next. But if indeed an interval of one full note or a half note occurred (the whole poem encompassed hardly more than an interval of two full notes, let us say from b to d) the effect was as if in our music a whole octave had been covered.

The most impressive, however, was the recitation of some verses from the Vedas in Sanskrit. Tagore wanted to demonstrate how the rhythm of modern Bengali was based on the old holy scriptures and that it has essentially remained the same throughout. Indeed, both these languages are very similar, only the old language is by far richer and greater, in its effective contrasts and wonderful harmonies it is solemn and majestic. We do not find a trace of hard and fast rules, there is a wonderful freedom which nevertheless implies the greatest unity to an extent which is known to our music only at its very best. I do not know how all of this is related to the vocal and instrumental music of ancient and modern India. I have read about it that even the men of the East need many years of preparatory study for it. The few samples of the recital of poetry which are only half music give an impression of a profound art. And Tagore

himself is a composer, singer and musician; he composes the accompaniment for his poems.

These were the highlights. But even in the everyday language of discussion and conversation (in English) which had nothing to do with poetry and music, he showed a similar subtlety of rhythm and intonation of word and sentence, of intervals and facial expressions. When listening to somebody else his hands would slightly move as if they wanted to express the reception of the other's words. Everything in this man speaks, the whole man speaks : he himself is the living expression, the living word. He did not learn to be like that, he did not plan it or train himself to behave like this, it is so deeply connected with the essence of his being that it could not be anything else than this. It has grown, it is not made or affected. And this is what I want to call culture.—Up to now I have not even mentioned the most wonderful element of this amazing language : the expressiveness of his eyes, these eyes, which—if anything in this world could make a poet out of me—would make me a poet.—

I am not in the habit of deifying human beings, however great they may appear to be. But I must say : If there are more of such Tagores in India (and people say there are) I can understand what I was hithereto unable to understand : how Indians are able to see gods in men who are living amongst them. The Indians see in such men gods who lift them up from the dust and raise them to the heights of purity where they can approach the godhead, and thus they learn to honour God in themselves.

We have forgotten about this. Tagore expresses surprise in his book "Sadhana" about the fact that the Christians although they know about the commandment "Be perfect as thy father is perfect", consider it to be a blasphemy when one ascribes perfection to a

human being. He himself does not want to be a god, a saviour, a prophet or a holy man. Those who assume that he does not know about earthly passions and that he does not recognize them as a poet, do not know him at all. But he believes it to be the truth when in his play "The King of the Dark Chamber" the king answers Sudharshana's question : "What do you see ?" in these words : "I see that the darkness of the infinite heavens whirled into life and being by the power of my love, has drawn the light of a myriad stars into itself, and incarnated itself in a form of flesh and blood. And in that form, what aeons of thought and striving, untold yearnings of limitless skies, the countless gifts of unnumbered seasons !"

Thus the poet sees the divine in the soul of man, in every pure relationship between man and man, man and woman, mother and child. A poem in the book "The crescent moon" tells us : "Heaven's first darling, twin-born with the morning light, you have floated down the stream of the world's life, and at last you have stranded on my heart. As I gaze on your face, mystery overwhelms me ; you who belong to all have become mine. For fear of losing you I hold you tight to my breast. What magic has snared the world's treasure in these slender arms of mine ?"......In this way the Indian feels the divine quality of a mother's love. My wife asked Rabindranath's son, who accompanied him on the journey, and who does not have the same high spiritual qualities as his father, but who is nevertheless a genuine and lovable man, whether the poems of children which she likes very much had referred to Tagore's own family. He bashfully admitted this but added that they did not refer to him but to his brother who had died young. My wife said with a tone of pity : "You have also lost your mother early". "Yes", he replied, and he closed his eyes as if to recall his mother clearly, and then he continued," when I was 13 years old."

The German people were once justly praised for the high regard in which they held womanhood and motherhood, which they considered to be almost holy. Even during the last war many of the dying soldiers cried out for their mother. But where is all of this today. ...Tagore does not know all about our cities and industrial areas, our blackmarketeers, our cliques of writers and artists. He restricted himself to positive remarks about the advantages of the East, where the working power of women is not so shamelessly exploited for profit as with us, where women are not yet as alienated from their life as mothers and from their duties in the home. And therefore women are still venerated in the East as they used to be in our country. Whosoever speaks of reconstruction should realize one important fact : A nation that does not respect mothers, that does not want mothers, will perish because it wants to perish.

Our appreciation of nature which had once been so strong in the German nation disappeared in the same way....The Indian, however, still loves his native soil. In a voice charged with emotion Tagore told us that once somewhere in India a commercial firm wanted to drive the peasants from their soil in order to construct a plant, but the peasants did not leave their land, covering it with their bodies, they even stayed on when the brutal messengers of culture poured hot water on them. They preferred to die rather than consent to give up their land for usurious profit. In Germany you cannot witness such love of the soil and of the country any longer...the people only look to money and entertainment in the exquisite fresh air of the industrial cities and in cinemas and tobacco shops...Is this our much praised culture which we want to give to the poor, backward inhabitants of the "ancient continents" ? This would be the end. Whatever we may destroy here at home will be after all only the impressive debris of something that was a culture once upon a time. And perhaps it is necessary to get rid even of these

remnants in order to build a new and more genuine culture on a fresh foundation. But in the East there is still a living, unimpaired culture, and this culture may be spoiled and uprooted. This culture has still its natural roots from which it draws sap to nurture such blossoms and fruits as this Indian shows them in his works, in his very being—and he is only one among many others. This is to me the most important significance of his visit to the West. This is the message not only of his spoken word but of his very appearance in the midst of a world which has lost its integrity to an alarming extent, which is going to pieces and which wages a suicidal war against all genuine culture. For this reason I was so deeply impressed with the culture of this only typical Oriental whom I happen to know. And this is also the essence of his mission. There was nothing surprisingly new in what he told us. Being experts in all sciences we know all that he could have told us for centuries, and if we think in our Western way that this man has come only to lecture to us about his knowledge of East and West, then we might have held up our chin and said : You could have stayed at home, you could have saved yourself the torture of touring the deserts of the West, because whatever you may tell us, we know it and we know it more accurately than you do. But this does not apply. Tagore is not a professor of comparative ethnology on a lecture tour, he is a man, he represents the urgent call of the wounded, but still unimpaired soul of the East. He calls for our own soul. He is looking for that point of unity where the souls of the East and the West can meet. He searches for the god of whom Goethe said :" To God belongs the Orient, to God belongs the Occident." It is a call of painful longing that is nevertheless imbued with an ardent hope that is greater than all fear and hesitation : He comes, comes, ever comes ! This is not science, this is consciousness. It does not rely upon the calculations of reason, but rests on an inner faith. It does not know proof or evidence, it only knows the appeal for a quest in our own

soul. A contact between soul and soul must be established ; here the spark will come off which will re-kindle the great flames of the divine love that unifies all.

Of course, Tagore also asks for the reasons for the enormous difference between the East and the West. He likes to deduce this difference from the experience of the forests which the Aryans encountered in India and in which they lived in close communication with nature, thus being free from the necessity of a struggle for existence which faced their brethern who had gone Westward and who had to make a living on the high seas or in fortified cities. Thus their chief characteristics were formed by the struggle against nature in which they saw more of an enemy than of a mother. He points out the differences of climate which also generated a different fauna and flora in East and West. Of course, such differences cannot be overcome. But they do not need to be decisive. Provided that there is some good will a balance of advantages and disadvantages could be achieved among nations. But why is there a lack of this good will ? Tagore does not deny the inevitability of differentiation and of a struggle of elements which are mutually opposed to each other. He does not dream of a human existence in some lost paradise of innocence and simplicity. Whatever there is had to be necessarily so. Differentiation also meant an increasing utilisation of all potentialities of life, invention, technology, organisation of working together and fighting together.... But this also implies a race away from the centre of all things towards the periphery. The centrifugal forces are increasing. Everything is subdivided more and more. Wars are faught not in order to defend essential things but only in order to amass more power, more space for new activities without rhyme or reason. The body which was supposed to serve the soul, compells the soul to serve it, and it would kill the soul if the soul could be killed.

Fortunately the soul lives and cannot be killed. But it is being tortured and humiliated... The real destiny of the soul is to penetrate the universe and to be imbued with the universe. It is wrong to assume that according to Tagore or according to the views of the Indians or Orientals in general, man has to renounce the world and the splendour of this life. The much quoted Nirvana only implies the overcoming of those vices which do not liberate the soul but hold it in bondage...

In nobler human beings the new man has already been incarnated, the man who has God in his soul, the man who is weak and helpless compared with those who still consider themselves to be powerful and great today, although nobody really enjoys pure violence any longer or seriously believes in its efficacy. However, this does not mean that will and intellect should henceforth abdicate their functions, but they should know their limits and willingly serve the noble qualities of the soul. I have only one final question : whether we, the German people, shall be able to make our own contribution to this new age, the era of the soul ? Tagore emphasized that to him all leading nations of the West seemed to be equally threatened by the same errors and perils. We had thought that this did not apply to us, at least we did not want it to come about....Who wanted it ? Did not we all run into it blindly ? After having lost a sense of proportion we challenged the whole world without even realizing it, and after having done so we had to fight up to the bitter end. And the spirit of fighting has not left us yet, this spirit is an obstacle to the new spirit which is moving us now more deeply (so we think) than it does other nations. But the spirit is there and we can hope that according to our national character it will grow stronger and stronger within us. The outward defeat which is such a great burden to us, is also an asset because it demonstrates the futility of a mere striving for power, the second age of the

dinosaur, of which Tagore spoke. Tagore told the workers in Darmstadt when referring to the class struggle that the salvation always comes from the oppressed and never from the oppressors. The history of our nation proves this point: whenever we had to bend under a cruel yoke we reached our greatest heights...

Let me sum up my impressions: Tagore is not a saviour or a holy man to us, no apostle and reformer, no philosopher or ethnologist, and not even an educator, although we are greatly in need of one these days. He himself has emphasized that each nation can only create its own indigenous religion, poetry and culture by using its own and not alien resources. He does not want to convert the West to the religion and culture of the East or vice versa. He wants that East and West should cooperate in order to save the afflicted humanity. In this way he sets a great example for us, an example that we should not imitate blindly, but that we should emulate in our own way. He warns us in a brotherly spirit. He does not force his criticism upon us, he wants to help us to see the danger and to overcome it. He gives us hope and consolation, he demonstrates to us in his own being and work the integrity and profundity of genuine humanity, and thus he shows us that after all mankind is not living in hell, estranged from all that is divine, without love and soul. We thank him for this as brothers and friends. We thank him who has come to us as a brother and who remains close to us even though he may be far away.

Hellmuth von Glasenapp : Tagore's arrival in Berlin

Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung, May 30, 1921

(Glasenapp met Tagore on his arrival and reported about his conversation)

The poet told me that he was very glad to be able to visit Germany at this time. He was sorry that he could not come to Germany last year due to some passport difficulties created by some foreign authorities. Germany means to him not only the country of poets and thinkers, the country of Goethe and Kant, but first of all the country which has shown an unselfish interest in the study of Indian languages and religions. He quoted Heine who had said, that the German nation had been the only one that did not try to capture outward treasures in India but had striven for the spiritual values of India. Tagore hopes that German and Indian minds will be able to cooperate in order to bring about a better understanding between the East and the West. In working for this aim which still seems to be rather remote Tagore is planning to convert his school at Shantiniketan into an international university which should promote the idea of a reconciliation of all nations and a unification of the cultures of the Orient and the Occident...Long after Tagore will have left Germany the ideas for which he stands will remain with us and he will also have pleasant memories of his visit to Germany.

Max Hochdorf : Tagore in Berlin

Vorwearts, Berlin, June 3, 1921

Berlin University wanted to receive Tagore in a festive manner. But about noon at the time which had been fixed for the poet's lecture, the students stormed impatiently into the great assembly hall. The vice-chancellor and the professors were surprised and annoyed at the curiosity of the youth which knew no bounds. They were afraid of a veritable riot which would have ill suited the reception of this herald of meditation and wisdom. The vice-chancellor requested the students not to violate the dignity of the university... he threatened to call in the police if his request was not heeded. The turmoil subsided only after some time and policmen had to clear the way for Tagore so that he could reach the rostrum.—

He is a lean man of medium height. The oval bronze head is surrounded by a well groomed silvery beard. The face has a mild appearance ; with his long mustache and well cut beard he gives the impression of a fit and healthy old man. Tagore's body is concealed by the long grey silk gown of the oriental priest, but he does not seem to be a strange and aloof prophet. The priestly gown seems to be with him an official uniform. Perhaps he would feel uncomfortable in European clothes. I tried to catch a glimpse of his eyes. They are hidden under deep eylids. While the vice-chancellor welcomed the respected guest, he himself seemed to be preoccupied, he did not take notice of the fact that these remarks were meant for

him. He leafed through the pages of the typewritten manuscript from which he was soon to read his treatise on the ideals of his country.

Yes, indeed, he read a well prepared lecture with well enunciated points, carefully divided into paragraphs. He did not think of delivering a fiery speech inspired by an orphic mood of momentary exultation. His voice is surprisingly high. He lapses into a certain monotony, because he carefully follows each and every sentence of his manuscript. He uses no gestures to emphasize the different points of his learned treatise. Only when he quotes a Sanskrit verse he raises his voice in a singing tone. Only then he becomes rhapsodic and looks up from his manuscript, and when he gives the English translation of these quotes he tries to give a similar expression to these words. From the singing falsetto of the quotes he lapses back into the European intonation, and he says : The Himalaya is holy, the mountains and the rivers are holy, the animals and birds are holy, and man is holy, the laughing of animals and men is holy...

This was the essence of what he wanted to say at Berlin University. In Indian wisdom and in the religious and philosophical writings of ancient times as well as in the imagination of Kalidasa it is the unity of mankind which is the aim and the meaning of the song. Man should not be torn by conflicts, but he should conquer the world by conquering himself. Passion subsides because it does not have any access to man. All the parables that Indian thought might offer to the learned and to the simple-minded are always aimed in this direction.

After the lecture was over Tagore was surrounded by professors, ministers and diplomats, and Indians in white gowns and brown turbans. Everyone wanted to meet the celebrated man. Although

he is not very tall he bent down to everybody who asked him a question. And again I could not see his eyes, and I could hardly hear his voice because in a dialogue he speaks in a subdued, intimate voice ... The place between the opera house and the old library was brimming with crowds. Even the newspaper vendors left their stands in order to come and see. The students and all the working people who had found some free time in their lunch hour were waiting for this man whom they consider to be a wonderful enigma. If they could have penetrated this enigma they might perhaps have found that hidden behind this beautiful and venerable forehead there existed a world of confusing ideas which a good European of this year 1921 may have to reject.—But it was a festive day for Tagore, let us talk about these dangerous matters some other time.

Rudolf Otto : Preface to 'Rabindranath Tagore's Faith'

In the summer of 1930 Rabindranath Tagore visited our university at Marburg and delivered the lecture which is reprinted in this book. We were very deeply impressed by the dignified appearance of this noble Aryan from the East who combined simplicity with dignity, the form of art with spiritual content, and an all-embracing humanism with individual originality. He spoke to us about his faith. We were most impressed by the fact that he did neither dilate upon theories of comparative religion nor did he give us an abridged survey of Indian religions—he simply made us participate in his very personal religious experience, an experience which cannot be separated from this man and his individual life, but which because of its peculiar immediacy and through the impact of self-expression confronted us with the question as to what we know of religious experience and whether we have some substance of our own.

For this reason I want to publish this confession of Tagore in this book. I do not intend to use this confession in support of my own theology, nor do I want to pigeonhole it according to my categories of comparative religion. I feel again the great difference between the spirit of the Upanishads and the spirit that took its rise on the soil of Palestine and spread all over the world; the difference between the religion of the poet and the religion of the biblical prophets to which I owe allegiance. But I as well as others who are conscious of the Christian religion felt even more deeply the

enlivening impact of this profound personal experience and the refreshing stimulus which it gave to our own thought.

Tagore emphasizes that he is free from alien sentiments and imitation. Nevertheless he stresses the inheritance of his Vedic ancestors, and the similarity between their and his way of experiencing and interpreting the world. And, indeed, his roots are deeply embedded in the Indian soil. Some people have tried to interpret Tagore as a poet in the English tradition, they did not know that Tagore though a modern poet is part of a specific Bengali school of poets which he himself has rediscovered and interpreted. But even more so, there is indeed the old spirit of the Upanishads in his works.

When I visited Tagore while he was touring Germany in the course of his previous journey I asked him personally whether any one of the old holy scriptures of India had been of specific importance to him. He gave the answer which I had expected. He told me that his father had liked the Isa-Upanished best of all, and that he had read it with him, and that he himself had been greatly moved by the spirit of this fine piece of poetry. I therefore want to publish this Upanishad as an appendix to his own confession of faith. It is very interesting to see how the old religious experience here arises again in a modern soul, and it is even more informative to witness how the old heritage takes on a new shape in this present form, and how it expresses itself in a very unique way in the individual form of this highly original man.

Correspondence between Prof. Rudolf Eucken and Rabindranath Tagore

(This correspondence was first published in the Tagore Volume of the Calcutta Municipal Gazette. Tagore himself seems to have thought of these letters as the best summary of his impressions of Germany. The translation of Eucken's letter which was published in the Calcutta Municipal Gazette is so literal that it is almost unintelligible. The text given below is an edited extract of Eucken's letter.)

Prof. Eucken to Tagore Jena, June 11, 1921

Dear Sir and Master,

I very much regret not having been able to meet you in Germany because I am hard pressed by work. But I must send you my greetings and tell you how sorry I am for having missed you. I should like to assure you of my sympathy and my appreciation of your noble work. We are both united by a common aim : we want to raise mankind to a higher level of inner consciousness. This task may be of a different nature in Germany and in India, but our final aim remains the same. There is a profound lesson in our German way of life : the combination of work and soul...In this modern world, however, work and soul have been torn asunder ; our culture has become a onesided culture of labour, and the soul has lost its power to unite the whole of life in harmony. At the same time we have experienced a national and ethical defeat, and

we have to worry about the existence of our heavily pressed people. But however dim this aspect of our life may be, we need not despair, because misfortune will not break our courage. In our German way of life there is a great depth and a great capacity for devotion. Even after heavy blows the German nation has always found itself again and has recovered despite of pain and sorrow...In the midst of this danger and distress it is a great pleasure and help to us to hear the voice of the noble Indian philosopher and to be encouraged by him. There will be certainly many things in our present life in Germany which may not please you. The outward appearance often predominates, the surface of our present day life is marked by many scars and rifts, and multifarious movements work at cross purposes. But all this does not affect the depth of German life and I request you not to lose your faith in the German people and their capacity to work...Germany wants to believe in a new content of life, it does not think along the lines of psychological reactions but looks to metaphysical foundations. In striving for this aim the German and the Indian way of thinking can supplement each other...

Tagore's reply :

Neues Palais, Darmstadt, June 13, 1921

Dear Master,

It has given me great delight to read your kind letter addressed to me. I had a desire to visit Jena and meet you there, but my engagement at Darmstadt has unfortunately upset my plan and it grieves my heart to leave Germany without seeing you. It has been said in our scriptures that there are three ways of realizing the Infinite according to the temperaments of individuals. These are through knowledge, through love, and through action. Their

respective paths are philosophy, religion, and science. But owing to the distraction of selfish passions and want of detachment men almost everywhere have missed their chance; and philosophy wrongly pursued, religion wrongly practised, and science wrongly applied have brought upon us continual series of disasters. It was the mission of Europe to inaugurate the era of *Karma-yoga* the fulfilment of self through action. And therefore the vehicle on which she was to travel to her goal she is made to carry on her head. She has suffered and the world is eagerly waiting to see how she takes the lesson of her sufferings. If it be the destiny of Germany to go through the penance for the sin of the modern age and come out purified and strong, if she can know how to make use of the fire that has scorched her for lighting up a path to the great future, to the apsiration of the soul for its true freedom, she will be blessed in the history of humanity.

I carry with me the most generous hospitality of heart offered to me by the people of this country and I leave behind me my love and sympathy for them.

Yours sincerely
Rabindranath Tagore

Rabindranath Tagore : The Child

In 1930 Tagore attended the famous "Passion Play" at Oberammergau, a village in Bavaria. This play which portrays the suffering of Christ is performed by the villagers once in every ten years in fulfillment of a vow. Tagore was very impressed by this play, and when he was asked by a German Film Company for a script dealing with Indian life he composed this poem in one night in Berlin. It is the only poem which he ever wrote directly in English free verse. The plan of producing a film based on a script by Tagore never materialized, but this poem remains with us as a testimony of a sudden inspiration and a surprising vision.

I

'What of the night ?' they ask.
No answer comes.
For the blind Time gropes in a maze and knows not
    its path or purpose.
The darkness in the valley stares like the dead
    eye-sockets of a giant,
  The clouds like a nightmare oppress the sky,
  and the massive shadows lie scattered like the torn
    limbs of the night.
A lurid glow waxes and wanes on the horizon, —

is it an ultimate threat from an alien star,
    or an elemental hunger licking the sky ?
Things are deliriously wild,
they are a noise whose grammar is a groan,
    and words smothered out of shape and sense.
They are the refuse, the rejections, the fruitless failures of life,
abrupt ruins of prodigal pride,—
fragments of a bridge over the oblivion of a vanished stream,
godless shrines that shelter reptiles,
    marble steps that lead to blankness.
Sudden tumults rise in the sky and wrestle
    and a startled shudder runs along the sleepless hours.
Are they from desperate floods
    hammering against their cave walls,
or from some fanatic storms
    whirling and howling incantations ?
Are they the cry of an ancient forest
    flinging up its hoarded fire in a last extravagant suicide,
or screams of a paralytic crowd scourged by lunatics blind and deaf ?
Underneath the noisy terror a stealthy hum creeps up
        like bubbling volcanic mud,
    a mixture of sinister whispers, rumours and
        slanders, and hisses of derision.
The men gathered there are vague like torn pages of an epic.
Groping in groups or single, their torchlight tattoos their faces in
        chequered lines, in patterns of frightfulness.
The maniacs suddenly strike their neighbours on suspicion
and a hubbub of an indiscriminate fight burst forth
        echoing from hill to hill.
The women weep and wail,
    they cry that their childern are lost in a wilderness
        of contrary paths with confusion at the end.

Others defiantly ribald shake with raucous laughter
their lascivious limbs unshrinkingly loud,
for they think that nothing matters.

II

There on the crest of the hill
stands the Man of faith amid the snow-white silence,
He scans the sky for some singnal of light,
and when the clouds thicken and the nightbirds
scream as they fly,
he cries, 'Brothers, despair not, for Man is great'.
But they never heed him,
for they believe that the elemental brute is eternal
and goodness in its depth is darkly cunning in deception.
When beaten and wounded they cry, 'Brother, where art thou ?'
The answer comes, 'I am by your side.'—
But they cannot see in the dark
and they argue that the voice is of their own desperate desire,
that men are ever condemned to fight for phantoms
in an interminable desert of mutual menace.

III

The clouds part, the morning star appears in the East,
a breath of relief springs up from the heart of the earth,
the murmur of leaves ripples along the forest path,
and the early bird sings.
'The time has come,' proclaims the Man of faith.
'The time for what ?'
'For the pilgrimage.'
They sit and think, they know not the meaning,
and yet they seem to understand according to their desires.

The touch of the dawn goes deep into the soil
and life shivers along through the roots of all things.
'To the pilgrimage of fulfillment,' a small voice whispers,
nobody knows whence.
Taken up by the crowd
it swells into a mighty meaning.
Men raise their heads and look up,
women lift their arms in reverence,
children clap their hands and laugh.
The early glow of the sun shines like a golden garland
on the forehead of the Man of faith,
and they all cry : 'Brother, we salute thee !'

IV

Men begin to gather from all quarters,
from across the seas, the mountains and pathless wastes,
They come from the valley of the Nile and the banks of the Ganges,
from the snow-sunk uplands of Tibet,
from the high-walled cities of glittering towers,
from the dense dark tangle of savage wilderness.
Some walk, some ride on camels, horses and elephants,
on chariots with banners vieing with the clouds of dawn,
The priests of all creeds burn incense, chanting verses as they go.
The monarchs march at the head of their armies,
lances flashing in the sun and drums beating loud.
Ragged beggars and courtiers pompously decorated,
agile young scholars and teachers burdened with
learned age jostle each other in the crowd.
Women come chatting and laughing,
mothers, maidens and brides,
with offerings of flowers and fruit,
sandal paste and scented water.

Mingled with them is the harlot,
shrill of voice and loud in tint and tinsel.
The gossip is there who secretly poisons the well
of human sympathy and chuckles.
The maimed and the cripple join the throng
with the blind and the sick,
the dissolute, the thief and the man who makes a trade of
his God for profit and mimics the saint.
'The fulfillment !'
They dare not talk aloud,
but in their minds they magnify their own greed,
and dream of boundless power,
of unlimited impunity for pilfering and plunder,
and eternity of feast for their unclean gluttonous flesh.

V

The Man of faith moves on along pitiless paths strewn
with flints over scorching sands and steep mountainous tracks.
They follow him, the strong and the weak, the aged and young,
the rulers of realms, the tillers of the soil.
Some grow weary and footsore, some angry and suspicious.
They ask at every dragging step,
'How much further is the end ?'
The Man of faith sings in answer
They scowl and shake their fists and yet they cannot resist him ;
the pressure of the moving mass and indefinite
hope push them forward.
They shorten their sleep and curtail their rest,
they out-vie each other in their speed,
they are ever afraid lest they may be too late for their chance
while others be more fortunate.

The days pass,
the ever-receding horizon tempts them with renewed
lure of the unseen till they are sick.
Their faces harden, their curses grow louder and louder.

VI

It is night.
The travellers spread their mats on the ground
under the banyan tree.
A gust of wind blows out the lamp
and the darkness deepens like a sleep into a swoon.
Some one from the crowd suddenly stands up
and pointing to the leader with merciless finger breaks out
'False prophet, thou has deceived us !'
Others take up the cry one by one,
women hiss their hatred and men growl.
At last one bolder than others suddenly deals him a blow.
They cannot see his face, but fall upon him in a fury of destruction
and hit him till he lies prone upon the ground his life extinct.
The night is still, the sound of the distant waterfall comes muffled,
and a faint breath of jasmine floats in the air.

VII

The pilgrims are afraid.
The women begin to cry, the men in an agony of wretchedness
shout at them to stop.
Dogs break out barking and are cruelly whipped into
silence broken by moans.
The night seems endless and men and women begin to
wrangle as to who among them was to blame.
They shriek and shout and as they are ready to unsheathe their knives,

the darkness pales, the morning light overflows
the mountain tops.
Suddenly they become still and gasp for breath as they
gaze at the figure lying dead.
The women sob out loud and men hide their faces in their hands.
A few try to slink away unnoticed,
but their crime keeps them chained to their victim.
They ask each other in bewilderment,
'Who will show us the path ?'
The old man from the East bends his head and says :
'The Victim.'
They sit still and silent.
Again speaks the old man,
'We refused him in doubt, we killed him in anger,
now we shall ascept him in love,
for in his death he lives in the life of us all, the great Victim.'
And they all stand up and mingle their voices and sing,
'Victory to the Victim.'

VIII

'To the pilgrimage' calls the young,
'to love, to power, to knowledge, to wealth overflowing,'
'We shall conquer the world and the world beyond this,'
they all cry exultant in a thundering cataract of voices,
The meaning is not the same to them all, but only the impulse,
the moving confluence of wills that recks not death
and disaster.
No longer they ask for their way,
no more doubts are there to burden their minds
or weariness to clog their feet.
The spirit of the Leader is within them and ever beyond them—
the Leader who has crossed death and all limits.

They travel over the fields where the seeds are sown,
by the granary where the harvest is gathered,
and across the barren soil where famine dwells
and skeletons cry for the return of their flesh.
They pass through populous cities humming with life,
through dumb desolation hugging its ruined past,
and hovels for the unclad and unclean,
a mockery of home for the homeless.
They travel through long hours of the summer day,
and as the light wanes in the evening they ask
the man who reads the sky :
'Brothers, is yonder the tower of our final hope and peace ?'
The wise man shakes his head and says :
'It is the last vanishing cloud of the sunset.'
'Friends', exhorts the young, 'do not stop.
Through the night's blindness we must struggle
into the Kingdom of the living light.'
They go on in the dark.
The road seems to know its own meaning
and dust underfoot dumbly speaks of direction.
The stars—celestial wayfarers—sing in silent chorus :
'Move on, comrades !'
In the air floats the voice of the Leader :
'The goal is nigh'.

IX

The first flush of dawn glistens on the dew-dripping
leaves of the forest.
The man who reads the sky cries:
'Friends, we have come !'

They stop and look around.
    On both sides of the road the corn is ripe to the horizon,
    –the glad golden answer of the earth to the morning light.
The current of daily life moves slowly
    between the village near the hill and the one by the river bank.
The potter's wheel goes round, the woodcutter brings fuel to the
        market,
    the cowherd takes his cattle to the pasture,
    and the woman with pitcher on her head walks to the well.
But where is the King's castle, the mine of gold,
        the secret book of magic,
    the sage who knows love's utter wisdom ?
'The stars cannot be wrong' assures the reader of the sky.
'Their signal points to that spot.'
    And reverently he walks to a wayside spring
from which wells up a stream of water, a liquid light, like the
        morning melting into a chorus of tears and laughter.
Hear it in a palm grove surrounded by a strange hush stands a leaf-
        thatched hut.
at whose portal sits the poet of the unknown shore, and sings:
    'Mother, open the gate !'

X

A ray of morning sun strikes aslant at the door.
The assembled crowd feel in their blood the primeval chant of
        creation:
    'Mother, open the gate !'
The gate opens,
The mother is seated on a straw bed with the babe on her lap,
    Like the dawn with the morning star.

The sun's ray that was waiting at the door outside
    falls on the head of the child.
The poet strikes his lute and sings out:
    'Victory to Man, the new-born, the ever-living.'
They kneel down—the king and the beggar, the saint and the sinner,
    The wise and the fool,-and cry:
    'Victory to Man, the new-born, the ever-living.'
The old man from the East murmurs to himself:
    'I have seen !'

Biographical Notes

Paul Natorp (1854-1924), professor of philosophy at Marburg University, one of the most important representatives of the so-called Neo-Kantian school of thought. He was also one of the intellectual leaders of the German Youth Movement which arose at the turn of the century in protest against the cant and artificiality of the Victorian era.

Rudolf Otto (1869-1937), professor of theology and religious philosophy at Marburg University, one of the founders of comparative religious studies in Germany. His main work "The Holy" and his essay on "Mysticism in East and West" as well as his studies of the philosophical systems of Ramanuja and his disciples established important categories of the study of world religions.

Count Hermann Keyserling (1880-1946) philosopher and essayist. His "Indian Travel Diary of a Philosopher" which appeared in 1921 was widely read at that time. He established the "School of Wisdom" at Darmstadt in 1920 at the invitation of the Duke of Hesse-Darmstadt. In 1921 he invited Tagore to lecture at this school. Keyserling wrote against the onesided rule of the intellect and advocated the cultivation of wisdom which is based on a deeper intuitive understanding of man and nature.

Rudolf Eucken (1846-1926), professor of philosophy at Jena University. He published several books on philosophy and religion

and was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1908. He strove for a spiritual life based on an understanding of one's self and a universal appreciation of reality.

Heelmuth von Glasenapp (born 1891) professor of Indology at Berlin and Tuebingen Universities. His many books on Indian philosophy and religion have contributed to a better understanding of Indian thought by the general reader. He reviewed many of Tagore's poems and plays in contemporary newspapers.

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